ESSAYS

AND

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

BY

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VERE HENRY,

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WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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MUHAMMADAN EDUCATION.

Some very important improvement has resulted to the Muhammadans of Madras from the action taken on the following Minute. The percentage of Muhammadans to the total population of the Presidency is six; the percentage at school was found in 1871–72 to be 4·4, or 5,531 out of a total numbering 123,689. It was shown in reply to the inquiries instituted by Lord Hobart that, if but few Muhammadans were employed in the higher grades of the public service, it was because few had qualified for admission thereto. Meanwhile the Director of Public Instruction considered that his department had done all that it could for Muhammadan education, and the Syndicate of the University, an independent body, did not see that any steps could be taken by it which would be likely to attract a larger number of Muhammadan undergraduates. The Government of Lord Hobart was, however, convinced that the existing scheme of Public Instruction was framed with too exclusive reference to Hindu students, and that Muhammadans were placed at so great a disadvantage that the wonder was, not that the Muhammadan element in the schools was so small, but that it existed at all. It was therefore decided that elementary schools should without delay be established "at the principal centres of the Muhammadan population, in which instruction will be given in the Hindustani language, and Muhammadan boys may thus acquire such a knowledge of the English language and of

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the elementary branches of instruction as will qualify them for admission into the higher classes of the Zillah and provincial schools and other similar institutions. . . . ." Arrangements were also, without loss of time, to be made for the training of Muhammadan teachers; and instruction in Persian was to be provided in any high schools in which there was a sufficient number of Muhammadan students.

Ten years afterwards, in 1880–81, the special schools maintained by Government were 11 in number, 7 Anglo-vernacular middle schools and 4 Anglo-vernacular primary schools. Nine schools, Anglo-vernacular or vernacular, were maintained by municipalities; and of aided schools, with a special provision for Musalman pupils, there were 4 Anglo-vernacular and 210 vernacular. Other inducements had also been held out to Musalman students. They were admitted to all schools upon payment of half the usual fees; seven scholarships were specially reserved for Musalman candidates at the University examinations; a special Deputy-Inspector of Musalman schools had been appointed; an elementary normal school had been established at Madras; and the University of Madras still continued to allot to the Arabic and Persian languages at its examinations a maximum of marks considerably larger than that carried by vernacular languages. The combined result of these measures was eminently satisfactory. In place of the 5,531 Musalmans at school in 1870–71, the returns for 1880–81 give 22,075. But it is not in numbers only that progress has been made; the percentage of Musalmans passed to Musalmans examined is nearly as high as that for any other class of the community, in the Middle School and Lower University examinations; but at present, from whatever cause, they seldom stay at college long enough to qualify themselves for a degree at the University. Accepting the fact that, at all events in many parts of India, the Musalmans have fallen behind the rest

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of the population, the Education Commission make several special recommendations in their favour. The Government of India have reserved this important subject for separate consideration.

MINUTE NO. II.—BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, DATED 29TH JULY, 1872.

Muhammadan Education and Employment of Muhammadans in the Public Service.

The gradual disappearance of Muhammadans from the public service of this country has of late attracted much attention both here and in England. That such disappearance is by no means imaginary so far as concerns this Presidency is shown by the table (A) annexed, from which it will be seen that of the 485 natives of India (of whom 417 are Hindoos) holding Judicial, Magisterial, or Collectoral appointments in the Presidency only *nineteen* are Muhammadans.

I submit that this is a state of things which ought not to continue. It is injurious, not only to the Muhammadans themselves, but to the most vital interests of the Empire. As regards the Muhammadans themselves—that they should have passed, from intimate association with us in the government of territories which they once ruled, into almost absolute political insignificance, and should have been superseded in that association by races whom they have subjugated, and whom they consider, not without reason, very inferior to themselves, is a result full of bitterness for Muhammadans, and which

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Englishmen, if on that account alone, must view with regret. On the other hand, it is a result in the last degree prejudicial to English interests in this country. In the first place, the exclusion of any class of the community, by any other fault than its own, from political power to which other classes are admitted, and for which it is not disqualified, is opposed to the general principles of political science; in the next, when the class excluded has a character and a history such as those of the Muhammadans of India, the temptation to disaffection and (should occasion occur) to conspiracy against the State is exceedingly strong; thirdly, the State, in losing the services of Muhammadans, loses the services of men possessing some peculiar qualifications for the business of government, and which are probably more valuable than those possessed by the races who have supplanted them; fourthly, one of the principal objects of according to natives a participation in our Government of India is that they may be interested in its stability, and this object is all the more important in the case of a class whose power for good or evil seems to be greater than that of any other in this country.

Before a remedy can be applied to the evil under consideration its causes must be clearly understood. These appear to be as follows:—

1. Muhammadan law and the languages in which it was conveyed have long ago given place to English law and the English language throughout India; and, therefore, the demand which formerly existed for Muhammadan functionaries in all the departments of

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administration in which legal knowledge is required has long ago ceased.

2. That very few Muhammadans qualify themselves for the public service, and this for two reasons, viz., (*a*) that they are under the impression that the Government is disinclined to admit them, whether qualified or not, to public employment; and (*b*) that such qualification is attainable only by means of the education given in schools established or aided by the Government, and that for the most part they object, on religious or other grounds, to that education.

The first of these causes — the change in our system of jurisprudence—is beyond the control of Government; the second it is in our power to modify or remove.

We have, then, to consider the two reasons (*a* and *b*) which, as above stated, seem to prevent Muhammadans from qualifying themselves for the public service, and in what manner those reasons can be made to disappear.

The first of those reasons (*a*) is the impression which prevails among Muhammadans that, even if qualified, men of their religion are scarcely ever selected to fill a vacant office. That this does not arise (as they suppose) from any prejudice on the part of the Government against them, may be safely asserted; that it is the fact, cannot be denied. And the explanation of the fact seems to be this—that qualified Hindoos, being more eager and ambitious aspirants to public employment than qualified Muhammadans, the former usually present themselves in the

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van of the crowd of candidates, while the latter are relegated to the background. The Hindoo is vigilant, unreserved, and self-asserting; the Muhammadan is indifferent, proud, and self-contained. The natural consequence is that the former is very commonly preferred to his equally well or even better qualified Musalman competitor.

I would suggest, then, that the Government should address a Circular to the Judges, Collectors of districts, and other Heads of Departments throughout the Presidency, stating that our attention has been called to the comparatively small number of Muhammadans employed in the public service; that we are anxious to see them take a part in it more proportionate to their numbers and intelligence; and that with this view we desire that the claims of those Muhammadans who have satisfied the prescribed tests should be the subject of special consideration when vacancies occur. We should also request them to furnish us with lists of Muhammadans now employed in their different districts or offices on salaries above rupees 10 per month. Such lists should be in a tabular form, showing the name of the person employed, his salary, the designation of his appointment, the vernacular languages with which he is acquainted, the nature of the tests which he has passed, with any other such particulars which may appear desirable; and it should be arranged that similar information on the same subject should from time to time be communicated to the Government. Two lists which have been made out by Colonel Wilson—one of Muhammadans now holding office,

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and from whom some might be selected for promotion; the other, of Muhammadans qualified for, but not employed in, the public service—might accompany the Circular; and the Heads of Departments must be directed to bear in mind these lists in the event of vacancies occurring in any of the appointments under their control.

If by measures of this nature, Muhammadans can once be convinced that their claims to public employment will be fairly considered, one advantage will be that an inducement will be offered to them, which does not now exist, to enter our educational institutions. One of the causes—though not the chief cause—of the almost entire absence of Muhammadans from our Schools and Colleges is this very impression, which it is now proposed to remove, that in face of the official preference for Hindoos and others it is useless to prepare themselves for the service of the Government.

The second ground (*b*) upon which Muhammadans abstain from self-qualification for official position is (as we have seen) that the education given in the Schools established or aided by the Government is of a kind to which Muhammadans, on religious or other grounds, are opposed. This evil—the reluctance of Muhammadans to avail themselves of our educational system, of which one of the causes has just been noticed, but of which the chief cause is this objection on their part to the nature of that system—constitutes in itself a serious calamity. The non-education, or the illiberal education, of a component part of the

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population of our Indian Empire which, though in a numerical minority, is in many respects the most important of all, is a misfortune under which it is impossible for us to rest content. To show that the evil actually exists the fact has only to be stated that, as will appear from the table (B) annexed, out of 115,212 pupils educated in Schools or Colleges established or assisted by Government in this Presidency, there are only 4,285 Muhammadans.

If, then, we can succeed in removing this second reason for the reluctance of Muhammadans to qualify for the public service, we shall not only have gone far to accomplish the immediate object in view—their admission to that service—but we shall be removing at the same time that which is a still greater evil than their exclusion from it—their non-attendance in our Schools. There could scarcely be a stronger case for making the attempt.

The question, therefore, is whether some modification of our educational system may not be possible which would obviate the objections entertained by Muhammadans to that system. Those objections seem to be at present very imperfectly understood. Some persons suppose that it is a point of religious duty with Muhammadans not to learn English; but this seems to be disproved by the existence of such institutions as the Madrasa-Azam in Madras, which is not the only one of its kind. Another statement is that Muhammadans will not send their children to our Schools because the Koran, or because Persian or Arabic, is not taught there. My own impression is

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that one of their principal objections is the absence of Musalman teachers; and I should suppose that there would be no great difficulty in providing such teachers for any of our Colleges, and for all our Schools in any of the districts where there is a considerable Musalman population. These, however, are questions on which the Educational Department must be in a condition to advise us; and I would suggest that the Government should at once place itself in official communication with that department, with a view to obtain full and explicit information and advice in this respect. The questions requiring answer are:

1. What are the most cogent objections felt by Muhammadans to our method of instruction; and might not that method be so far modified as, if not entirely to obviate such objections, at any rate so to diminish their force as to effect the object in view? There must surely be in existence some two or three Muhammadan gentlemen who would be able and willing to enlighten us on these points; and the Director of Public Instruction might be directed to confer with those gentlemen in order to obtain the means of furnishing us with a full reply to our inquiry.

2. What are the practical measures which they would recommend with a view to carry into effect any such modification? I cannot but think that with energetic and persistent action in this matter some satisfactory result is possible. I am strongly inclined to believe that if the Musalman repugnance to our educational system were carefully analysed, mis-

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understanding and unfounded suspicion would be found to be in a great measure accountable for it; and these, by the use of such weapons as candour and mutual confidence, it seems far from impossible to overcome.

HOBART.

TABLE A.

Showing the Proportion of Muhammadans employed in the Upper Grades of the Uncovenanted Civil Service.

Designation of Appointment.	Hindoos.	Muhammadans.	Others.	Total.
Judicial Department.				
Principal Sadr Amins on salaries of Rupees 500...	10	...	2	12
District Munsifs on salaries from Rupees 200 to Rupees 300	87	6	17	110
Total...	97	6	19	122
Revenue and Magisterial Departments.				
Deputy Collectors and Magistrates on salaries ranging from Rupees 250 to Rupees 600	31	2	17	50
Tahsildars...	143	4	9	156
Sub-Magistrates	146	7	4	157
Total ...	320	13	30	363
Judicial Department do ...	97	6	19	122
Grand Total ...	417	19	49	485

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TABLE B.

Educational Statistics.

Description of School or College.	Hindoos.	Muhammadans.	Others.
Institutions for General Education.			
Government Colleges	1,476	15	208
Do. Schools, Higher Class	1,773	272	84
Do. do. Middle do.	4,266	213	93
Do. do. Lower do.	741	...	...
Do. do. Mixed Schools	...	...	25
Private Colleges	1,537	123	633
Do. Schools, Higher Class ...	5,636	317	919
Do. do. Middle do. ...	16,323	729	3,235
Do. do. Lower do. ...	50,615	2,359	2,861
Do. Mixed Schools, Middle Class	379	11	748
Do. do. Lower do.	6,571	195	3,239
Do. Female Schools, Higher do.	...	...	122
Do. do. Middle do.	2,333	...	3,069
Do. do. Lower do.	688	...	968
Total ...	92,338	4,234	16,204
Institutions for Special Education.			
Medical College	33	3	68
Civil Engineering College... ...	17	3	61
School of Industrial Arts	103	11	153
Ordnance Artificers' School ...	...	...	75
Government Normal Schools for training Teachers	985	16	117
Private Normal Schools	354	18	419
Total ...	1,492	51	893
Institutions for General Education Total ...	92,338	4,234	16,204
Grand Total ...	93,830	4,285	17,097
	115,212		

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